

Live Political Story of the Female of the Species and the Predatory Male

THERE is only one James Barlow in this city, and he is ever a privilege to know. Even at the times when he remembers that his written and spoken word on international law is respected as authority the world over he is still a real person, and as human as they're made. But when he dives into the past and salvages the picturesque days of his youth and poverty, then, then is he the joy of all good listeners.

We had been talking idly of the changes of recent years, and some one asked him, curiously, whether or not he was an advocate of women in politics.

All I've got now I'd exchange on the instant to live over again the time when I was scrambling through my law courses, living on two meals a day. The sole wrappage of it was that I thought it was fun even then.

But once pneumonia got me and I was taken to a hospital. My real ordeal began when I was discharged as cured, too weak to do more than stagger along, without a cent in my pocket and hardly a friend in the city. I went out into a November sleetstorm and, after I'd dragged myself a block or two, fell, unconscious on the street.

I dropped down on the very steps of Cyrus Hooper's house, and Mrs. Cyrus came out and found me. A beautiful, big red-headed woman she was, with a heart as big and as open as the plains of her native state. She picked me up herself—I didn't weigh very much after pneumonia—and she carried me into the house and put me down on a sofa, wrapped me in blankets and tried to give me something hot to drink.

When I came to, there she was, leaning over me. "You poor kid," she said. "Lie still. Don't try to talk."

Then I heard her speaking to some one in the room. "Cy," she said, "I just wish you'd look at this boy I found fallen down in front of my house. I've sent for the doctor—I don't know what's the matter with him, but he looks half starved and sick enough to be in bed."

"My good Geneva," a man's voice answered, "you don't know but he's got the smallpox."

"He hasn't got the smallpox," she answered, with a sort of laugh in her voice, "because if he had he'd be spotted."

She came to my side and I managed to grasp out that I'd just come from a hospital, where I'd had pneumonia, and that I'd be all right in a few minutes.

"There now, Cy," she said, triumphantly, "you see—he hasn't got the smallpox. He's wasted away to skin and bone, the poor boy. Here, slip an arm under his head and we'll carry him upstairs."

I CAN hear her voice yet—deep and warm, with a sort of sweet resonance in it, like the murmur in a violin when the strings are touched very gently.

She and Cyrus carried me upstairs and put me to bed, and I stayed right there for a week. Mrs. Hooper nursed me, and found out everything about me—past, present and future. Naturally, as soon as I was well enough, she took my life in hand and arranged it for me.

I was to stay right there, in her house, and be Cy's private secretary, and I wasn't working at my studies, I was to help him in some of the studies which he found hardest. I was to occupy a little room in the third story of their little cramped house, and I was to have all my meals with them.

I didn't resist her, not for a moment, for my bout with illness had frightened me. I made all sorts of good resolutions about how I'd buckle down to my studies and what I'd do for the woman who had rescued me from death, or worse.

I am forgetting Cyrus, and why he needed a private secretary. It was his first term in Congress and he was actually living on his salary and voting as his conscience told him. He had brains—a brain with an edge to it.

Good old big Cy Hooper! Every one knows him now. Congressman three terms, governor, senator two terms; he just missed the nomination for President.

The Hoopers had a little house on an obscure street, and there they were a real home. Of course, they were nobody, but they were glad of it.

Geneva had that clear skin that now and then comes with red hair—that creamy, delicious color that makes a beautiful red-headed woman more beautiful than any other. Her lips were very red and her eyes were brown. I could rave on about her for hours. There never was any one like her. She was impulsive and generous, and yet level-headed. She was interested in every new reform move. She knew the whole game of politics through and through, as well as Cyrus did, yet she was what is called a home woman, and what a cook! Old-fashioned things, you know, that nobody ever hears of nowadays.

Well, the reason why Cyrus needed the services of a secretary was this: Quite contrary to the usual precedent, he had been appointed to two committees, a very important and desirable public lands for a western man, that is, and one fairly so-mimes and mining. This brought Cyrus into the limelight, and naturally his work increased with his importance. He was not fooled by it, however. He was a cautious man and shrewd, besides which he had been more or less in state politics all his life.

He and Geneva talked it over, as they talked over everything.

"There's something fishy about it," said Cyrus, "but as I haven't been able to find out what it is, I'll develop sooner or later."

"Probably sooner," said Geneva. "In the meantime, you've got a chance to make yourself known—and felt. Cy, it must be Ryerson—public lands and mines, you know. Oh, isn't it infamous that a man like him should have his dirty paws on a big, glorious state like ours, and to think that he believes that you will play his game for him."

I'm anything but an organization man. I've thought differently—well, I wouldn't be here in Washington—you know that."

"You've never fought him because you've never had to," she replied. "But that doesn't mean that you won't when you have to. Now, does it?"

"You know it doesn't," said he, quietly.

"That's the worst of politics," she mused. "You've got to work with such abominable tools to get anywhere or anything."

"It's not only the worst of politics," said Hooper, "it's the worst of life. But we're here to give Ryerson an awful run for his money when he shows his hand. And then I'm going back home and make my next campaign on a clean platform. And I'll win."

THAT was the first conversation that I had with her where they stood, and the thing about it that interested me most, youngest that I was, was that they didn't fool themselves about anything—they knew their possibilities and their disabilities, and there was no great-man bunk lurking in the mind of either of them. That's the kind that goes far—mark my words. That's the kind of Americans we ought to breed—and don't, always.

Ryerson I'd hitherto known about only vaguely. He was a state boss of the old type. He played a long, wailing game, and he had a certain ferocious elemental strength that most men shrank from combating. A grizzly bear sort of man, moreover, violent, always on the defensive, and as cunning as a grizzly when he attacked.

Gathering all this about Ryerson, and desperately grateful to Geneva Hooper, you can imagine with what partisan ardor I threw myself into the cause of Cyrus Hooper. I was his slave, his pack horse—in so far as he'd let me be. Nothing was too much, nothing too difficult. Old Tammas Carlyle knew what he was talking about when he said that "great men, taken up in any way, are profitable company." Hooper was a great man, in many ways, and knowing him and making him my hero, I steadied myself to work and study and decent living as nothing else had ever steadied me.

There was plenty of work for me, too, for the appointment to the two committees made Hooper a man much talked of, and a man much in demand by all the various party interests. His appointment served notice on the world that it was intended he should be re-elected, and that he was to be reckoned with in a big way. His future was made—if he went right. Right meant Ryerson's way. Very few people suspected Hooper of determined, powerful honesty, and most of them would not have trusted him so much if they had suspected him of it.

Cyrus made no parade of his inner self. He went his way, cautiously and decently, as he always had done, and very cannily. And, in the meantime, he and Geneva and I and Junior—a nice boy the youngest was—lived in the little, unfashionable, homelike house in the wilds of Washington. I had a desk and a decrepit old typewriter in the back parlor—and that was Hooper's office.

I WAS sitting there pounding away one day when the door opened and Hooper came home from a session at the House. Through my work, I got the feeling that there was a lightning in the room. The place was filled up with beating waves of violent human anger and combativeness. My hands dropped off the keys and I looked up to see Hooper's face, torn and ravaged by all the emotions, with which he had so electrically charged the room, and yet implacably still and set. He just stood there a minute or two, and then he lifted his head and said, "Geneva, he and I thought didn't call loud, it went all through the house."

She came downstairs instantly. She didn't even stop to lay down her sewing, but carried it in her hands, a piece of red stuff, like blood—and she held it clasped to her breast in a frightened way.

"Yes—yes—what is it?" she called. Hooper sat down suddenly, though the mere sight of her had relaxed all his tension. "The fight's on, Gen," he said. "Ryerson's here."

"Oh—h," she said, and that warm, rippling voice of hers fairly stilled with relief. "Ryerson! I thought you had hurt yourself—or were sick." She began calmly to hunt for her needle in that piece of red sewing stuff. Women are wonderful, say what you will.

"I expect I'll be sick again before the thing's over," he said, grimly, but he relaxed, too.

"Tell me about it," she said, dropping down on the sofa beside him. "When did he come?"

"This morning," said Hooper. "He had a session with Senator Titcomb, and another with the chairman of the public lands committee, and then he came after me. He's up to bigger game than I thought."

"What is it?" Geneva's lips tightened. "It's the whole of the Unifund Hills district," said Hooper. "He's got it all sewed up in a sack, ready to carry off. The committee has merely to report favorably on his bill, and he'll have the whole thing—40,000 acres."

"But, Cy," she interposed, "he can't get the part where the settlers are?"

"That's the diabolical part of it, honey," said Cy. "Not one of those folks has got a clear title. They don't own their own homes, that they've literally made, bit by bit, any more than you own the middle of the street out there. Ryerson's found that there are good mining prospects there, and so he's asking Uncle Sam to turn out this little band of pioneers and give the lands to him. The preliminaries are all framed up. The way's been greased in the House, and I dare say in the Senate, since that old gray rat Titcomb, is in it."

"What are you going to do?" asked Geneva, but I knew she asked only for the joy of hearing him say it.

"I'm going to fight Ryerson every inch of the way, in the committee, in the House, in the papers and in the mine, you know. Oh, isn't it infamous that a man like him should have his dirty paws on a big, glorious state like ours, and to think that he believes that you will play his game for him."

"Easy, Gen," cautioned Hooper. "He's got no reason to think that

Hooper. "He can't get anything on me. But what are you afraid of, then?" asked Geneva.

"Oh, I don't know—it's intangible. But when you're after a man like Ryerson you don't go into a decent, straightforward, stand-up and knock-down fight. You fight sly and vile and unseemly and unbecoming. If he does anything either to you or Junior, I'll be there."

"Junior?" said Geneva, and every protecting mother that ever lived, human or beast, was in her voice and in her eyes. "Let him dare to try to hurt Junior?"

Hooper gave his big shoulders a little shake. "Oh, well," he said, "we're probably getting all wrought up over nothing. Anyway, you know what I'm going to do."

"I knew you'd never do anything else," said Geneva. So proud. So splendid.

THAT was the prelude to the heroic battle of Ryerson and Hooper. Ryerson fought the boss in committee; he fought him in the House;

to the Monday before still in this parlous state.

HOOPER came home tired and discouraged that day. "There's been a sudden suspicious lull in Ryerson's activities," he said. "That looks mighty bad. It's a favorite way of his to spring some low-down trick at the last minute. I wish I was fighting a man—not a pirate and a thug."

"Oh, what can he do, Cy?" asked Geneva, a little impatiently. "You're just worn out from this whole miserable business. It's on your nerves."

"Yes, it's on my nerves," said Hooper. "It's bound to be. Gen. Ryerson's got plenty of men who'll swear that he'd committed any crime on the calendar, if it would get his bill through. All I ask is—be careful."

The next day, when Hooper was at the house, and Junior was out, a woman called at the Hooper home, a woman almost as large and fine-looking as Geneva herself, as far as figure went. You could not see her face. She was veiled three deep. Of course,

suggested Geneva, mildly, to me. "Or, on her hands there, where I've tied them."

The thought of that red-hot poker advancing behind her was too much for the woman. She began to nod her head feverishly.

"Never mind about burning her just now, Jimmie," said Geneva, "but put the poker back in the coals."

"With that she untied her captive's mouth and walked around in front of her."

"Ryerson sent you?" she asked. "Yes," said the woman, and slid into a string of oaths and expletives against Ryerson such as I'd never heard.

"That'll do," said Geneva, sharply. "Now, what's the plan?"

Hit by bit it came out and Geneva wrote it down. Occasionally the woman had to be threatened with the poker.

Her name was Tillie Fletcher. She had, by her youth, known Hooper. She had lived in the western university town where Hooper had taken his degree—worked his way through. She was a bold silly sort, I take it,

If she calls for help, ear her mouth and get the clothesline and well tie her so she'll be perfectly secure. Under no consideration let her out of your sight, and if I do not come back within an hour you are to notify the police and send to the house for Cyrus. Here's the address where I'm going."

"Oh, what are you going to do, Mrs. Hooper?" I burst out, miserably. "Let me go for you, won't you, and you stay here with this woman?"

The captive gave me a disdainful look. "I won't eat you, kid," she said. And to Geneva: "He's afraid of me, all trussed up like this, too!"

"You do as I say, exactly," said Geneva to me, "and remember, if I'm not back here in an hour, get Cyrus and the police and come to this address—and lose no time about it. I'm going to see Ryerson."

This news stunned the captive and me alike. "You've got your nerve," admitted the woman, admiringly.

"I have," said Geneva. And with that she departed.

Geneva went straight to the hotel near the capitol where Ryerson made his headquarters when in town. Tillie Fletcher was expected, and when Geneva came in, all veils, and asked for Ryerson, there was no question. She was taken at once to the boss's sitting room. He was busy with a box full of papers, his back to the door, as she came in, and he did not look around.

"Well," he growled, "did you get the noble young reformer and his wife?"

Geneva threw back her veils. "No," she said, "but I've got you."

The old man wheeled and confronted her. "Who the devil are you, madam?" he asked.

"I'm Mrs. Cyrus Hooper," said Geneva, leisurely, standing there with her back against the door. "And I came to tell you that your game's up."

"You're caught with the goods this time, Mr. Ryerson. I know the whole filthy business. You sent Tillie Fletcher to my house to tell me the crudest lie that can be told to a woman. You've done the same to other women. But you got the wrong wife this time. Tillie Fletcher is at my house, tied, hand and foot. I've got her signed confession as to why she came there. I've sent for the head of the Associated Press bureau, and for every man who represents a really big newspaper in Washington. They're on their way to my house now and when they get there I'm going to show Tillie Fletcher to them and give them her confession to print. I'm going to have a lawyer there, too, to decide how you can be most fully prosecuted. I'm going to run you out of the state, you dirty dog. You'll never be able to go back there, when they know what you've tried to do to the wife of a decent man. They'll lynch you. Now, you've got just one chance. Do you want to hear it, or do you think you can keep on fighting after this?"

RYERSON stood there, measuring her with his stony old eyes. He knew that he'd run up against a new proposition. At last he dropped his hand heavily to the table.

"Well, what do you want?" he asked. "First, those forged letters," commanded Geneva.

"I haven't got them."

"It's a lie. They are locked up in the table drawer."

He sucked in his breath and stared at her, meditating.

"I'll give you one minute," said Geneva, "otherwise I go back to show Tillie Fletcher and her confession to the newspaper men."

She put her hand back on the knob of the door, as if he were going. The old man slowly brought out a key, unlocked the table drawer and produced a big stuffed envelope, tied and sealed.

"Put it down on the table and stand back from it," said Geneva. He did so and she went swiftly forward, picked it up and retreated again to her place beside the door.

"Now," said Geneva, "if you want to save your worthless hide, you sit down there and write a letter to my husband. Tell him that you have found yourself in the wrong about the Unifund Hills district; that you had no idea that your claim would dispossess so many good citizens of their holdings, which, though not theirs according to the full letter of the law, yet should rightfully be theirs. Say that later investigations have proved to you that you are in the wrong. Tell him that you authorize him to withdraw your claim before the House committee, and that you have written to Senator Titcomb to do the same before the Senate committee. Tell him that you honor and respect him for the brave stand he has taken and that you feel that every man in the state owes him a debt of gratitude for the way he has represented the interests of those poor settlers, who had no protection before the law. Put it on thick, dry paper. It's your only chance. And don't waste any time about it."

In the end, Ryerson wrote what she wanted. Then she demanded that another letter confirming this one be written to Senator Titcomb. She took both the letters when he had finished them.

"I'll give these to the newspaper men instead of Tillie's confession," she said to the old man, who sat in speechless, glowing rage. "As for you—listen to me. You lift one finger against Cyrus Hooper—and I'll go on the stump myself through the whole state and tell this story and show my proofs. You can play politics with the men, and get away with all sorts of things; but when you play politics with women you're up against high explosive. Tillie Fletcher's story will be kept ready to spring on you until you're dead. I shall see to that. I'll give it to every big newspaper in this country with directions to print it if you don't keep to your agreement here. Remember that."

She put one hand behind her, twisted the door open and got outside. She got home a minute or two before the end of the hour, and maybe I wasn't glad to see her come in. Tillie Fletcher had used every word in language to persuade me to let her go—ranging from cajolery to threats and profanity. She made my blood run cold, some of the things she said. Naturally, Geneva didn't lose any

time getting Ryerson's letter to Hooper into his hands, and Titcomb's into his, and in giving out the information to the newspapers. It was a splendid victory for Hooper, of course. Every one played him up as the coming man. It gave him his first big boost upward. He's kept on climbing. A fine chap, Hooper—a real American.

"Tillie Fletcher? Oh, that's funny. She was horribly afraid of Ryerson, and begged Geneva not to turn her out. And Geneva let the woman stay

in her house for a week or more, made her help with the cooking and housework, and finally got her off to New York to a friend of hers, who found work for her.

But, you know—the whole business now! How perfectly, how beautifully feminine! Which is to say—elemental. But since that time I have not been much concerned whether women are in politics or not. Why worry? They can always get what they want, anyhow.

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LARDNER DESCRIBES ARCTIC GOLF CLUB

Steel Balls Barred as They Naturally Head for Pole.
Ice Tee in Spitzbergen—Daylight Saving a Feature.

TO the editor: A couple weeks ago I printed an article in the Valley dist. and since then have been besieged with letters from members of golf clubs in other parts of the world asking me to give them the same space like I give to the famous Egyptian golf club as they are badly in need of new members and even such small publicity like I can give them, is a big help in the drive for new members which seems like it is universal.

Well, friends my motto has always been live and let live and treat

ing seal skin coats as a great many of them has had their flippers frozen trying to hold the bag while the players was making chip shots with a ice pick. Without flippers even these caddies is a flop.

Par for the Arctic course is 11 months and 2 days. Doc Cook claims to of beat same but his caddy claims that he did not count his score for the last hole which is the toughest hole on the course.

This last hole is a water hole. The tee lays in Spitzbergen and is called a ice tee. The drive is across Barents sea to Lapland. A slice ball goes



"THIS LAST HOLE IS A WATER HOLE. THE TEE LAYS IN SPITZBERGEN AND IS CALLED A ICE TEE."

everybody alike so will devote my article today to a brief outline of the advantages of the Arctic Circle Golf Club and membership in same in the hope that enough readers will join same so as to put the club on a paying basis.

Well friends will state at the outset that the Arctic club has got the most ideal location of any golf club in the northern dist. as it is right close to Greenland where the most of the greens is turned out.

The course is in the limits of the Arctic circle which extends 23 and a 1/2 degrees in every direction from the north pole and therefrom has a yardage of a trifle over 8 millions square miles. You don't hardly ever shoot out of bounds.

The weather is practically the same all the yr. around and for people that intends to live at the club will state that while the sun sometimes beats down for as much as 6 months at a time, why they's hardly ever a night

clear out of the circle on the right which is out bounds. A hook goes gechunk into Barents sea. A straight drive lands in Lapland but your troubles is only just started.

The 24 shot is an Eskimo's dog's leg to the left. The distance is only 26 degrees but a high loft or a top ball is libel to land you either in the sea again or on Franz Josef island which is a terrible place to shoot out of as the polar bears infests this island and golf balls is their meat.

THE player must catch up with the ball and let it again before the bears has grabbed it off otherwise another ball must be dropped in Lapland and shot from there with a penalty of 3 months and 11 strokes.

The big problem vs. which the officials of the Arctic golf assn. has had to fight vs. on this whole is the tendency on the part of crooked explorers to use a steel ball on this hole which naturally could not go nowhere only directly towards the pole.

There is a stringent rule vs. the use of these balls as also vs. the use of black balls which is a whole lot easier to see on the white ice and snow background. It may be said in regards to the latter nuisance that a great many crooked players has been black balled out of the club.

The president of the club has been found fault with time and time again for his strictness in enforcing the rules but his answer is that without absolute honesty the great Scandinavian game has not got no future.

In fact it was only after the most terrible of arguments and Scandinavian eskimo dog fights that he at last permitted the use of compasses in place of direction flags to point the direction of this 18th hole.

Letters of application for membership in this club must be written in pure alcoholic ink which will not freeze before it reaches its destination and it would be far better for the applicant to change his name from Jack or Alex or Tony or similar Scotch sobriquets to names that has become identified with golf in those regions like Admiral or Eric or Doc.

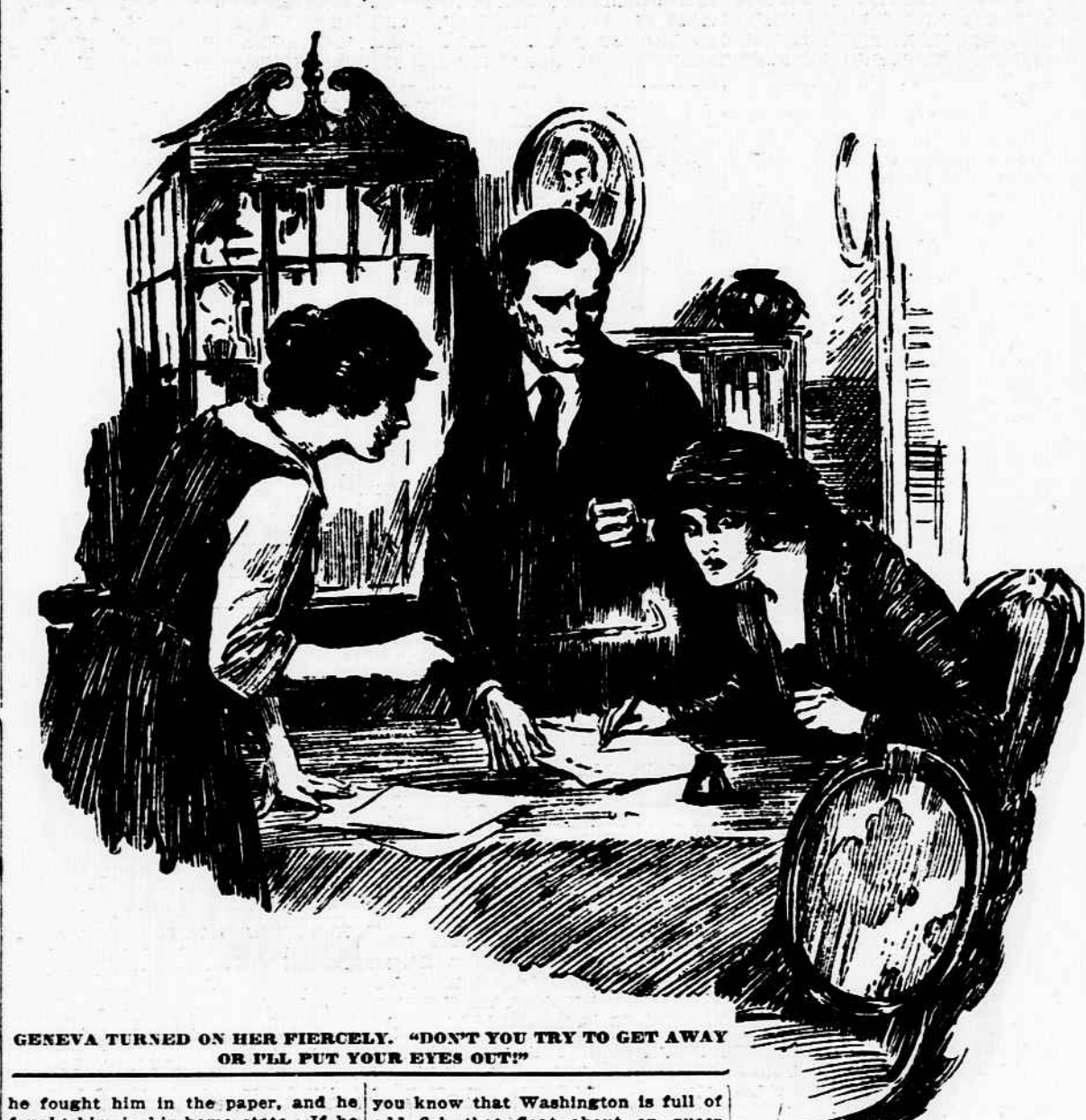
RING W. LARDNER.
Great Neck, Long Island, Nov. 3.

What Atolls Are.

IT has been shown by the investigations conducted by scientific expeditions to the Pacific islands that there is a slow elevation going on there, which, by lifting the reefs gradually above the waves, preserves them from erosion at the top and enables vegetation and certain animal forms of a terrestrial character to exist there.

This is in opposition to the old idea that the atolls were formed by the gradual subsidence of small islands and that the coral insects built up encircling reefs as the islands sank. Recent reports show that the elevation of the islands is a general phenomenon, but variable in amount, some islands rising rapidly and others very slowly.

Both the flora and the fauna of these islands are confined to a very few species, although, seen from a distance, some of them appear very rich in vegetation.



GENEVA TURNED ON HER FIERCELY. "DON'T YOU TRY TO GET AWAY OR I'LL PUT YOUR EYES OUT!"

he fought him in the paper, and he fought him in his home state. If he had been a prominent man in the public eye before, you can judge how much he was in it now. It was a dull day that there wasn't a cordon of reporters sitting the back parlor and crowding my typewriting machine, and Cyrus and me in the middle of it, giving out stuff at the rate of a mile a minute.

He had some unexpected assistance, too. Another representative from his own state developed a little backbone and gave Cyrus moral support and some real aid locally back home, and both were more than welcome.

Moreover, the plain people, the farmers and miners and people who live in the little bare towns, who knew all about the folks in the Unifund Hills district, began "to get their dander rized." They rallied to Hooper. Some of the little country papers in his state came out boldly against Ryerson. Then one of the papers in the state capital published an editorial called "The Handwriting on the Wall," in which it prophesied the downfall of Ryerson and the rise of Cyrus Hooper as the big political power of the state. It made a sensation, that editorial, and was copied all over the state, with bitter comments by the Ryerson press and joyful ones by the Hooper faction. Then one of the Washington papers investigated the Unifund district and sent on some sort of stuff, with photographs, about the poor, horny-handed settlers, with their gaunt, pathetic wives and little children, who would soon be forced, because of the greed and rapacity of Ryerson, into losing their homes—their all. One of the New York weeklies took it up, with a special story telling coming in every paragraph.

Of course the real brunt of the thing fell on Cy. And he was perfectly magnificent—a regular berserker. He wasn't on the defensive for a moment—no trench warfare for him. No, he took a grenade in his hand, stuck his pistols in his belt, and with a bowie knife between his teeth, he was hot-foot after the enemy every minute. It was beautiful.

Yes, it was beautiful—but it didn't get so very far. Cyrus was a new man; Ryerson was one of the old guard, and had affiliations everywhere. Many a man who would have been glad to vote with Hooper was warned by interests in his own state not to interfere with Ryerson. The situation finally resolved itself into a deadlock. Ryerson had pulled every wire he knew, and he had a good line up. Hooper felt pretty certain that the greater part of the minority party would stand by him, if for no other reason than to harass and annoy the majority. And, of course, he had friends in the majority party. But did he have enough? There was still that fatal doubt. But it was going to be far too close a vote for Ryerson's comfort, and the one thing we were sure of was that Ryerson himself was bitterly uneasy. He had come on to Washington to direct his campaign in person. He was spending money like water. He was throwing every ounce of his influence into the scales. He was probably counting noses and checking lists as desperately and as doubtfully as we were. Yet that was cold comfort, for the bill would reach its place on the calendar on Thursday, and we had come

you know that Washington is full of odd fish that float about on queer quests—and try to get the help and influence of congressmen. When Geneva came down to her parlor she assumed that this well-secluded female was one of the usual whimsicalities. As for me, I was in the back parlor behind the curtain, boning away on my law books, and didn't pay any heed to anything until I heard this:

"Simply because he married you no reason why he should fling me away—and refuse to do anything for me—and for my child."

I sat up with a jump. Then I heard Geneva, at her softest and silliest: "Is there a child?" she asked.

"There's a boy—two years older than yours, and he's Cyrus Hooper's oldest child," came back the woman's voice again, defiantly, yet with a sob in it. "I've got papers to prove it—and I've got Cy's letters—and everything. The wedding certificate that he tricked me with, and the letter's he's written me since—I've even got the letter he wrote me when he said he was going to marry you—that he'd never been really married to me. And I tell you, I'm going to let the whole world know what sort of a man Cyrus Hooper is."

Her voice got higher and higher—sobbing, hysterical, tortured. "Is that so?" came Geneva's voice, still quiet and soft. There was the sound of a light scuffle, and then Geneva called out:

"Jimmie—come here—quick!"

"I was in that door with one bound. Geneva was holding the woman, with her arms pinioned to her sides, by the simple trick of turning her coat back and down.

"Tear off one of this woman's veils and tie it across her mouth, so she can't make a noise," said Geneva, and I did.

"Give me your handkerchief," commanded Geneva, and with that she tied the woman's hands behind her back.

"Sit down," she said, forcing her prisoner into a chair. Then she coolly unbuckled a sash belt the stranger was wearing and used that to buckle the woman's feet to the chair.

This done, Geneva walked deliberately over to the little coal grate and laid the poker in among the hot coals. "What—what are you going to do?" I stammered.